

THE
VICAR of *Banbury*
CORRECTED:
OR, AN
ANSWER
TO

Benj. Loveling's Reply,

(To a Letter of *Richard Vivers*)

INTITULED

The Spirit of Quakerism Rebuked, &c.

With a Copy of the said Letter.

By *RICHARD VIVERS*.

He that is first in his own Cause, seemeth just; but his Neighbour cometh and searcheth him, Prov. 18. 17.

LONDON, Printed and Sold by T. Sowle, in *Warren's*
Hall-Court in *Gracechurch-Street*. 1702.

THE
 VICAR of Bampton
 CORRECTED
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 Benj. Lovelings's Reply,
 (To a Letter of Richard Nixon)

INTITLED
 The Spirit of Quakerism Rebounded, &c
 With a Copy of the said Letter.

BY RICHARD NIXON.



He that is first in the Kingdom shall be last: but the
 Neighbour cometh last. Prov. 18. 17.

LONDON, Printed and sold by T. B. in the Strand.
 1703.

*To my Neighbours in Banbury in Oxfordshire,
or whom else it may Concern.*

HAD not our Neighbour *Benjamin Loveling*, Vicar, so severely Reflected upon our Christian Profession and Doctrines, and most falsely Represented both them and our Friends, as he hath done, I had not had occasion thus to appear.

But when he hath so Contemptuously termed Christ's *Light within*, which we profess, to be an *Insignificant, Uncertain, Litigious Principle*, as he doth, p. 52. and without any Proof asserts our Doctrines to be not only *Erroneous, Heretical*, and our Principles *Blasphemous and Damnable*, tending to subvert *Christianity*; but also, that I and my Friends are *Hereticks, Blasphemers*, and *Ignorant Heathens*, and the *Worst Subjects in the World*, &c. I could not but esteem it necessary to Publish this little Treatise in Answer to his, and Recommend it to your Serious Consideration, and Impartial Examination by the Holy Scriptures, with both the Contents thereof, and all the Christian Doctrines we hold, and make Profession of: For we can in Sincerity declare, We do truly own the Holy Scriptures, frequently Read them, and Recommend them so to be Read; and also quote them for Proof of our Doctrines, and hold no Doctrine or Principle that is inconsistent therewith; nor desire any Doctrines that we Preach should be received by any, that are contrary thereunto. Although we know our Uncharitable and Malicious Adversaries assert the contrary, and are more desirous to be Credited, than that we should be Believed; and had much rather we should be counted Erroneous, than they false Accusers.

But this is no strange thing to us to be thus Misrepresented; for the Faithful and Self-denying Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ have formerly met with the like Treatment from Proud and Angry Priests, and their Ignorant and Deluded Admirers.

By such, Christ himself, the Son of the Living God, was called a *Deceiver, Blasphemer, a Samaritan*, and said to have a *Devil*.

To my Neighbours in Banbury, &c.

And his Disciples and Followers were rendered (by that Generation, or Seed of Evil-does, that shall never be Renowned, and whose Name shall Rot). *Sowers of Sedition, Turners of the World upside-down, Drunken, and called Pestilent Fellows, and vain Bablers.* And that Way, which they worshipped God in, (which was in the Spirit and Truth) was almost every where spoken against, and called *Heresie*, by the Foolish and Ignorant, as ours is by such now.

But this is our Comfort, that we can truly say, *After that Way, which some Men call Heresie, worship we the God of our Fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets, and have Hope towards God; and believe, there shall be a Resurrection of the Just and Unjust.*

And my Neighbours, I doubt not, but upon Serious and Impartial Examination, ye will find, that our Neighbour the *Vicar*, although he is so loud in Clamour against us, saying, *We Contemn the Holy Scriptures, Deny the Ever-blessed Trinity, and Jesus of Nazareth, Undervalue his Sufferings, Despise his Ordinances,* yet is he as far from Proving it by plain Scripture, as he is False in Charging. And I provoke him, or any of the most Malicious of our Adversaries to Confute, by plain and express Scripture, any Doctrine we hold: For we are assured, he, nor none of the Enemies of that Truth we profess (however they are filled with Envy and Fury against it or us) shall ever prevail against either. For,

As by that Faith and Patience the Truth hath brought us to, as we abode therein, we have hitherto overcome the Persecution and Sufferings we have met with, by Spoil of Goods, Warrants and Sequestrations, obtained by Priests for *Tithes*, long Imprisonments, severe Treatments therein, cruel Banishments, for our Religious Exercise; and many of our Friends have lost their Estates by *Premunures*; for keeping the Command of Christ, and not Swearing; So we likewise believe, we shall be made more than Conquerors, through him that hath Loved us, and Died for us, over all our Envious Opposers of, and Inveterate Apostates from, that Unchangeable and Eternal Truth we profess.

And as the Government, by the Lord's Merciful Providence, is favourably pleased to afford us the Exercise of our tender Consciences, in our Peaceable and Religious Assemblies; for

To my Neighbours in Banbury, &c.

for which we are humbly Thankful unto God, and It; and are Resolved, by the Grace of God, to continue the Queen's Peaceable Subjects, and to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God; and all Men; notwithstanding the Rage and Enmity of Apostates, and of some Angry and Malicious Priests, that endeavour to render us Obnoxious, by whatever, from their Envious Hearts, with their Pens they write against us. But we are satisfied; we have a Record in Heaven, and a Witness in the Consciences of those in Authority, as also in you our Neighbours, that for many Years have observed our Conversations, that we are not such as we are most falsely accused to be.

So heartily desiring your Welfare and Happiness, both in this World, and that which is to come; and being well assured, that God would have all Men to be saved; and for that end, hath caused his Grace, that is sufficient, to appear to all:

I Recommend you thereunto; and my Prayer is unto God for you, and all Men, that you may not only believe in Christ his Son, by whom the Grace is come; but may also learn thereof to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and be enabled to live Sobberly, Righteously, and Godly in this World; which, if you wilfully neglect to do, you cannot be saved, whatsoever your Pretensions are to Christ and Christianity: And if you are not saved, the fault will be your own; which, that you may not be Guilty of, is the sincere Desire of

Your Friend and Neighbour

R. A.

The

[The Copy of the Letter.]

To my Neighbours and Townsmen in Banbury, or whom
else it may Concern: These are to Advertize,

THAT one Francis Bugg writes to me as followeth:
 "I purpose on Monday the 21st of September next, to be
 "in this Town with my Books, to prove my Charge, viz. That
 "the Doctrine you hold (i. e. the People called Quakers in
 "and about Banbury) tends to subvert the Christian Re-
 "ligion.
 "To which I say, He takes the wrong way to prove his
 "Charge; for if he was able either to Prove his Charge,
 "or Refute the Answers that have been given him there-
 "unto in Print, he should take that way to Prove, he hath
 "done to Charge, i. e. Publick Print: For there is no pro-
 "portion between what is talked among a Rabble in one
 "Country Town, and what may be spread in these several
 "Nations. And if F. B. is so Magisterial to Summons, let
 "not any be so foolish to think, the Quakers are so weak
 "as to observe his peremptory Summons, or can no better
 "spend their time, than to attend when, and where he
 "shall Ramble about the Country with a Packet of Books:
 "For whatever little mean ways he may take to get a Pen-
 "ny by his Books, or to ingratiate himself into such Igno-
 "rant or Malicious Persons as himself, in hopes or expecta-
 "tion they will give him Money for his Work; I would
 "have all know, he is not worth our notice; neither do my
 "Friends here, as I understand, intend to take such notice
 "of him, knowing he is one of little Reputation; though
 "he serves, as a Mercenary Agent, for certain angry Per-
 "sons, that have more Ignorance than true Devotion, and
 "want both Scripture Arguments to Refute the Christian
 "Doctrines we hold, as well as Godly Lives to Convince
 "those that know them, that they are more Christian in
 "their Conversation, than your Peaceable and Religious
 "Neigh-

The Copy of the Letter.

“ Neighbours, called *Quakers*, who they account *Heterodox*
“ and *Erroneous*.

“ And the *Quakers* choose rather to put to Silence the
“ Ignorance of foolish Men, by well-doing, than to be like
“ unto them, by entering into such Publick Debates and Con-
“ ferences with them, which may tend to the Breach of the
“ Peace, and have no tendency to those Good Ends pro-
“ posed by the Government, of *Uniting the Queen's Protestant*
“ *Subjects in Interest and Affection*; the Two great Bonds that
“ hold them together, against those that, to gratifie their
“ Ends, seek their Ruine.

“ And if this busie officious Man, who seeks Gain by these
“ ways he takes, more than Godliness; and to beget Enmity,
“ and raise Persecution among the Queen's Peaceable and
“ Protestant Subjects, rather than to Unite them in Interest
“ and Affection, is employed by any for those ill Ends, it be-
“ hoves all the Queen's Subjects to give no Countenance or
“ Incouragement to him in these Practices: For my part, I
“ nor my Friends shall not gratifie him nor them therein,
“ by having such rambling noisie People, that he may get
“ together to hear his Drollery, be Judges of things they
“ understand not: Yet are we not conscious, that he can
“ prove, by plain Scripture, any of the Doctrines we hold,
“ to be either Erroneous, or to have the least tendency to
“ subvert Christianity; neither hath he, nor any one that
“ ever yet writ against them, so proved their Doctrine; altho'
“ they have been loud in their Clamour, like *F. B.* and false
“ in their Charge; yet they have been short in such Proofs,
“ as those that would know our Doctrine, and prove them
“ by the Scripture, may find them agree thereto. Let any
“ therefore but seriously read our Books (wherein they are
“ laid down and defended) and they may plainly see, our Do-
“ctrines are not contrary thereto: Therefore I shall request
“ all the Sober and Impartial, that desire to be satisfied, to per-
“ use the same; and if they so peruse and prove them, before
“ they Censure and Condemn us, or our Doctrines, they will
“ be more Just than those that will both condemn us as *He-*
“ *terodox*, and call our Doctrines *Erroneous*, when they know
“ neither, nor have never considered our Conversation, nor
“ tried our Doctrines.

“ Therefore

The Copy of the Letter.

"Therefore I advise all, to Hear, Try, and Judge for
"themselves; and to mind that Spirit, which many have
"been long praying to be inspired with, that
"they may have a Right Judgment in all
"things*: Which that all may, let them be
"careful, they neither slight, quench, grieve,
"rebel against, or disregard the Reproofs of
"it in their own Hearts, if they would know
"God, or the things of God, be helped to pray to him, to
"live to his Praise, to enjoy Peace with him, and be such
"Worshippers that the Father seeketh to worship him; or
"would be Christ's, or Sons of God, they must love, receive,
"be taught by, obey, learn of, and be led by this Holy Spirit,
"which they have so long prayed to be inspired with, which
"only gives a Right Judgment in all things. Which, that
"you my Neighbours may, is the sincere Desire of your true
"Friend, and Peaceable Neighbour, that by the Grace of
"God, have had my Conversation among you for many
"Years; who testifieth to you all, This is that Day wherein
"the Lord hath poured forth his Holy Spirit upon you,
"yea, all Flesh.

Richard Vivers.

Banbury, the 18th of September, 1702.

E H F

T H E
VICAR of Banbury
CORRECTED, &c.

THis Undertaking, to Correct the *Vicar*, is a very unpleasant Task to me, who am a Lover of Peace and Quietness, and take no delight in Litigious Controversies; for I can truly say, I had much rather have been silent, than to have concerned my self after this manner, had not he been the Aggressor, and thereby necessitated me to this Defence.

But whether his Fondness to be in Print, from the Opinion of his own Abilities, or his Officiousness to concern himself in *F. B's* Quarrel, from the great Affinity he hath with him, in his malicious Design, to render our Friends Blasphemers, and Obnoxious to the Government, and their Principles Blasphemous, and their Doctrines Damnable; or, to shew his Folly and Weakness, in Writing a Book of 58 Pages, in Pretence of a *Reply* to about 80 Lines, which were written by me, and only in Manuscript, to advertize, That neither I, nor my Friends did intend to take such notice of *F. B's* Peremptory Summons, as to meet him pursuant thereunto, for the Reasons assigned in the said Manuscript: Whether, I say, any of these things did induce him to do that which he confesses in his *Preface*, viz. That in so much weighty Business (as he pretends) he should give himself that trouble to Answer so Inconsiderable a Paper, it may be thought strange. Yet, as strange as it may be thought, he hath ventured at it; but so it is, as he confesseth truly, *There are many* (not a few) *groveling low Thoughts*, to use his own learned Phrase. And truly I am of opinion,

B. he

he might as truly have said, Much Folly and Passion, as also many Tautologies and Emptiness; although indeed he saith, *If his Word may be taken for it, that if he appears Muddy, he may be excused*; but if he can be excused of his Muddiness, yet whether he can from his Folly, Passion, and Enmity against the Quakers, I shall leave my Neighbours, and those that read, to judge, whether he ought to be excused, without acknowledgement thereof, in suggesting, p. 6. that *they have imbibed Poyson*; p. 7. *Poysonous Tenets*; and in p. 8. that *I have acted contrary to Humanity*; and in p. 20. that *We (i. e. the Quakers) are the worst of Subjects in the World, being bound by our very Principles to be bad Subjects*; and renders it Fatal to give us too much Liberty to propagate our kind; and that we do not deserve the Name of Subjects, neither ought to be numbred amongst Protestants; and p. 21. *So far are Quakers from being truly Protestants, that they are not so much as Christians*; and adds, *That he thinks 'tis no Railing, nor Ungodly Speech, to call us Ignorant Heathens*; for it is a proper Name due to us; and that we ought not to be numbred among the Family or Household of Faith; and p. 24. he saith, *Admitting some People do, Imploy Mr. Bugg, for the raising Persecution,—it cannot be said, that he is therefore Imployed by any for ill Ends*; and p. 28. *We (i. e. Quakers) allow of no Christ without*; p. 29. *Nothing is more certain, than our Denial of the ever-blessed Trinity*; and p. 44. *Let their Conversations be what they will, as long as their Doctrines are Heretical and Blasphemous, they ought to be Censured and Condemned*; and p. 58. *Nothing sure can be more provoking, than to see 'em call themselves Peaceable Subjects, Protestants and Christians*.

Now, I desire my Neighbours and Townsmen, and all to whom this may come, to consider how agreeable this *Vicar's* Treatment of me and my Friends, is to his Pretensions; and calling God to Witness, in his Preface, *That he hath no manner of Malice or Ill-will against the Quakers*; or how this proves his being what he asserts himself, viz. *A Minister of the Gospel*. Also, I intreat they may peruse my Paper, and his Reply, and compare both with the Holy Scriptures, and see which is most agreeable thereto, and which appears most like a Minister of the Gospel; I, that was for avoiding Strife; or he, that hath thus angrily concerned himself with the Strife, that did not belong unto him.

And

And let it also be observed, how mannerly he treats the Government, which hath in Wisdom and Tenderness, Recognized us *Protestant Dissenters*; and the Queen, who hath declared her Resolution, to stand by the *Act of Toleration* to her Dissenting Subjects, which this Neighbour of mine, styles the *Toleration*, p. 25. *Our supposed Toleration by Law*: From whence it may be inferr'd from him, that it is more our Supposition, than any Reality in the Government. But I rather conclude, it is more his Prejudice, Enmity, and Misrepresentation of them, than the least Intention of the Queen or Parliament, to deprive her Dissenting Subjects of the Liberty of their Consciences, they enjoyed in the late Reigns, and do still, through the Lord's good Providence, and the present Government's Favour, enjoy; for which we are humbly Thankful unto God and the Queen: And it is the Resolution of me, and my Friends, through the Grace of God, to live Peaceably under the Queen, and to be found in the Discharge of our Duty towards her, and all in Authority, and to pray for her and them; and shew, by our Conversations, that we have not imbibed Poyson, nor are infected in our Loyalty to the Queen, neither hold Poysonous Tenets, nor act contrary to Humanity, nor are her worst Subjects; nor bound by our very Principles to be so bad, as not to have liberty to Propagate our Kind in a Christian manner, as the Vicar is pleased to say.

And although it be our Lot in this Age to be counted *Hereticks*, and *Ignorant Heathen*, and our Way *Heretic*, and our Doctrines *Blasphemous*, and our Selves *Blasphemers*, and both Censured and Condemned by some Interested and Prejudiced Persons, who are fuller of Rancour, than Reason; and Folly, than Consideration or Wisdom; and for want thereof, both Rail, call Names, and Misrepresent us and our Doctrines, instead of Confuting them by plain Scripture; and often beg the Question, and falsely suggest Meanings and Intentions, and impose their own on us; and are angry if we cannot receive them, when they cannot bring any express and plain Scripture for what they assert; as I shall Demonstrate by a few Instances.

1. First, He confidently saith, p. 29. *Nothing is more certain, than their (i.e. Quakers) denial of the ever-blessed Trinity.*

When indeed nothing can be more untruly said of us, than that; for we truly own the Three that bear Record in Heaven, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*; and sincerely believe the same, according to 1 *John* 5. 7. *Mat.* 28. 29.

And if this be no Opposition to the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, why should we forfeit all manner of Claim to the *Act of Toleration*, as he saith we do, p. 30?

2. He speaking of our denying the Scriptures to be the Word of God, p. 27. saith, *The Quakers have egregiously so done, having expressly assured us, That the Scriptures are in no sense the Word of God; and to call them so, is the highest Blasphemy.*

To which I answer, If any have or should assert the Scriptures to be that Word, that is one of the Three that bear Record in Heaven, it would be Blasphemy: But whatsoever the Scriptures call themselves, we ever did, and do freely own them to be; and our Friends have always acknowledged the Holy Scriptures to be the Words of God, and have owned the Divine Authority of them, and believe they are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, and able to make wise unto Salvation, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus, and the best outward Rule of Faith and Manners; yet we do give the Preference to that Holy Spirit, by which the Holy Men of God were moved to write them, and were led by, and which now leads the Faithful into *all Truth*, according to Christ's Promise; the which we do also say can only give a right Judgment and Understanding of the Scriptures, and by which they, and the things of God, are to be savingly known: And yet we freely own and esteem the Holy Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament* to be the best Book in all the World; and therefore what he saith he will evince, p. 35. is yet to do; viz. *That the Quakers exalt their own Books and Sayings above the Holy Scriptures.*

3. He saith, p. 28. *The Denial of Jesus of Nazareth to be Christ, the Son of the Living God:—The Guilt of this is Chargeable on the Quakers.*

Reply, Now this is as notoriously false, as maliciously charged by him; for I do most sincerely declare, That I and my Friends do firmly believe in, dearly own, and expect Salva-

tion by the Lord Jesus Christ; knowing there is no Name given under Heaven, whereby any can be saved, but his; whose Goings forth were from of Old, from Everlasting, or the Days of Eternity, as the Prophet *Micah* declares, chap. 5. and who was Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin *Mary*, wrought Miracles, and by the Finger of God cast out Devils; suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification; even him, whom God Anointed, *Jesus of Nazareth*, with the Holy Ghost and with Power, do we dearly own; who went about doing Good, whom the *Jews* slew, and hanged on a Tree; Him God raised up the Third Day, and shewed him openly, and is only ordained of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead; to Him give all the Prophets witness; Him do we believe in, and confess to, of whom it is truly said, *That through his Name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive Remission of Sins*; even Him, that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God, all things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made; in him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men; the true Light, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World; who is not only in his Saints, and shines by his Light in every Man, but sitteth on the Right Hand of God above; and no other Christ do we own.

¶ Yet my Neighbour still goes on, Charging, but not Proving; and in p. 30. saith, *That the Quakers are guilty of this prophane Contempt of these Compassionate Ordinances, (viz. Baptism, and the Lord's Supper) is demonstrable.*

Reply, To which I declare, in all Sincerity, That I and my Friends own the Baptism of Christ, and the Supper of the Lord, according to Holy Scripture, *Mat. 28. 19. Rev. 3. 20.* And I firmly believe, none are Members of Christ's Body or Church, but those that are baptized with his Baptism; of whom *John*, that did indeed baptize with Water, said, *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*, *Mat. 3. 11. Luke 3. 16. Mark 1. 8.* And this is plain from what the Apostle saith; *By One Spirit are we all baptized into One Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be Bond or Free; and have been all made to drink into One Spirit, 1 Cor. 12. 13.* And this is the One Baptism.

Baptism, of the One Lord Jesus Christ, who never did (as I can find by the Record of the Holy Scriptures) command his Ministers to Baptize with Elementary Water; for, although he said after his Resurrection, (and all outward Washings, that were Signs and Figures, were ended by his Death) *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth; Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, Mat. 28. 18, 19. Yet there is not one word in Christ's Command to Baptize with, or in Outward Water, or to sprinkle Infants in the Face therewith, and to Sign them with the Sign of the Cross; and then to say, as in the Book of *Common Prayer*, 'Seeing now, dearly beloved Brethren, that this Child is [by Baptism] regenerate, and grafted into the Body of Christ's Church, (as if outward Water could effect that) let us, say they, give Thanks to Almighty God for these Benefits, &c. For although my Neighbour, and such as he, may find some Profit by this Practice, so as to get Money to themselves; yet I do not find either Precept or Precedent for it in the Holy Scriptures.

And as to the *Lord's Supper*, by Outward Bread and Wine, which the *Vicar* calls the *Eucharist*; and saith, *It exhibits Spiritual Nourishment; and consequently the debarring Men of these Ordinances, hinders them from being joyned to that Body, whereof Christ is Head; and so cuts off all Communication of Graces (at least in the Ordinary Way) from the Head to them.*

Reply, To which I say, That which in their *Catechism* is said to be the *Inward Part*, or *Thing signified*, I and my Friends own, viz. *The Body (or Flesh) and Blood of Christ*: And I and my Friends do firmly believe, that there is no way to be a true Member of that Body, whereof Christ is Head, but by eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood; for he said, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you: And whoso eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last Day; for my Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed: He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him*, John 6. 53, 54, 55, 56.

Now they who do not experience or know this, are no Members of Christ's Body, or Church; neither do they dwell

dwelt in him, nor he in them; neither do they know the Communication of Graces from him the Head to them, if they have not a Portion in him, or are not grafted by true Faith into him. But there is a Possibility that Persons may be found in the use of the Outward and Visible Signs, of *eating Bread and drinking Wine*, and yet be ignorant of the Communication of Graces from Christ.

And as it is plain from Christ's Words, that none can have Life, or be true Christians, and know a dwelling in him, and he in them, but they that Eat his Flesh; and Drink his Blood; and I suppose my Neighbour will grant, that none but those, who are Believers in Christ, and have a lively and stedfast Faith in him, can be worthy Receivers: So it is as plain, that such who have believed and received Christ, the Inward and Spiritual Grace, and know him to dwell in them; will, as they abide in him, experience him by his Spirit in them (which he promised should bring all things to their Remembrance) have a lively Commemoration of God's great Love in sending of Christ, and Christ's Love in suffering for our Offences, and dying for our Sins. For the Holy Spirit is not wanting, as it is kept to, and waited in, to stir up our Remembrance, and to influence and lead us, not only to Admire God's Love and Mercy to us, and to give Humble Praises and Hearty Thanksgivings unto him for the same; but also to enable us (that can do nothing that's good of our selves) to walk worthy of this great Favour, in all well-pleasing before him, in Love, Fear, and Humility. And what absolute Necessity is there for such, that know and experience this Inward and Spiritual Grace, to be found in the Use of the Outward and Visible Sign, of Eating and Drinking Elementary Bread and Wine, in Commemoration of him, whom they know to dwell in them, and they in him; who, by his Spirit, promised to bring all things to their Remembrance? And I am persuaded, that the Vicar cannot bring any Command of Christ, after he suffered, to prove the Continuance of that *Jewish Rite*, as *Goodwin* calls it in his *Moses and Aaron*, l. 3. c. 3. For the Eating of Bread and Drinking of Wine, was practised by the Jews at the Celebration of the Passover. And did not Christ, by the Offering of his Body upon the Cross, put an End to the Law,
and

and all the Jewish Rites, Ceremonies, Types, Figures, Signs and Shadows?

But if the Vicar urgeth, *That Christ commanded the eating of Bread and drinking of Wine before he suffered, as in Mat. 26. 26. Mark 14. 22. Luke 22. 19.*

I answer, Christ also, before he suffered, washed his Disciples Feet, and told them, saying, *Ye ought to wash one anothers Feet; for I have given you an Example, that ye should do as I have done to you, John 13. 14, 15.* Doth it therefore follow, that all Christ did, and bad his Disciples do, before he suffered, (that came to fulfil all Righteousness, and to put an End to the Law, for Righteousness sake) is now to be practised by Christians, that have received him, and with and in him, all things that are needful? And if he saith *Nay*, then why must this Jewish Rite be continued and practised? Or, this Outward and Visible Sign, used by those that have received the Inward and Spiritual Grace, or the Thing signified?

And if he objects and saith, *The Disciples, that had received Christ, practised it, and therefore we ought.*

I deny his Consequence: For they enjoined the *Abstaining from Blood, and things strangled, Circumcised according to the Law, and Baptized with Water*; and yet it doth not follow we are so to do: For the great Apostle of the Gentiles, *Paul*, saith, *Christ sent me not to Baptize, (i. e. with Water) but to Preach the Gospel, 1 Cor. 1. 17.* And he told the Believers, *If they were Circumcised, (i. e. with the outward Circumcision) Christ should profit them nothing, Gal. 5. 2.* But he was for the Circumcision and Baptism of the Spirit: And I suppose my Neighbour is not in the Observation of the Decree of the Church at Jerusalem, mentioned *Acts 15. 28, 29.*

And yet is he so uncharitable to conclude, That there are no true Christians, or Possibility of Salvation by Christ unto any, but those that are in the Use of the Outward and Visible Sign of eating Bread and drinking Wine, or being sprinkled with Water, and signed with the Cross, nor any other way of Communication of Graces, but by the Use thereof? Because he saith, *The Barring of Men of these Ordinances (as he calls them, but hath not proved them so to be) hinders them from being joyned to the Body, whereof Christ is Head; and so cuts off all Communication of Graces (at least in the Ordinary Way) from the*

the Head to them. But he seemeth to grant, by an Extraordinary Way, they may be joyned to that Body, whereof Christ is Head, and have a Communication of all Graces from him to them. And then how does the Vicar know, but I and my Friends may be so joyned to that Body, whereof Christ is Head, and have a Communication of Graces from him; although many of us were never so sprinkled with Water, and signed in the Forehead with a Cross, which he falsely calls *Baptism*, when indeed it is *Rantism*; nor ever used those Outward and Visible Signs of eating Bread and drinking Wine? And if he knows not, nor can't prove, but that we have heard Christ's Voice, have opened to, supped with, and are joyned to him; have eat his Flesh, and drank his Blood, are baptized by the One Spirit into the Body; how dares he think, or say, *We are Ignorant Heathens*? Doth this prove him to be, what he vainly Conceits himself, *A Minister of the Gospel*? I shall leave it to my Neighbours to judge: And whether he also, by his Fruits, is not known to be a false Teacher? For thereby the false Teachers were to be known, as Christ said, *By their Fruits ye shall know them.*

But indeed I may say of my Neighbour B. L. he doth not appear by his Book to be cloathed with the Sheeps Cloathing, *Good Words*; for he manifests the Wolfish Nature, in Barking so loud against us, rendering us no *Protestants*, but *Hereticks*, *Blasphemers*, *Ignorant Heathens*, the *Worst Subjects in the World*, and thinks it not improper to have an Eye upon us: Which, with more to this purpose, he writes to incense the Government and People against us, to have us worried and persecuted; saying, p. 24. *Admitting F. Bugg is employed by some People for the raising Persecution, it cannot be said he is employed for ill Ends.* Why is it that the Vicar is so angry and malicious against his Neighbours, called *Quakers*? Doth or can any one think, this is the way to inform their Understandings, or convince their Judgments, or induce them to believe he is a Follower of him, that advised to *let the Tares and Wheat grow together*, admitting we were such? And if B. L. hath not the Mind of Christ, nor abides in, but transgresseth his Doctrine, we find what is said of such, 2 John 9. And if he be not of that Number, wherefore doth he say, *Admitting some People do employ Mr. Bugg for the raising Per-*

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secution, it cannot be said, that he is imployed by any for ill Ends: So that by the Vicar's account, Persecution is not ill, at least the imploying of F. B. for that End is not so. What then? Is Persecution of the Vicar's Peaceable Neighbours, called Quakers, so good a thing in his Judgment, that he is for Imploying F. Bugg to raise it against them; and to help it forward himself, terms them Ignorant Heathens, Hereticks, Blasphemers, and what else Malice can express?

But let it be remembred, he hath not proved them Unchristian in Principle, Doctrine or Conversation; yet saith, p. 44. *Let their Conversations be what they will, [mark, what they will, though never so Sober, Honest and Just] their Doctrines are Heretical and Blasphemous, and ought to be Censured and Condemned: And what follows? Persecution, and the Execution of the Law, which provides, That Blasphemers against God be put to Death. But the Vicar asks, Why should not F. B. accept of Gratuities? For the Cause he undertakes is good, and he ought (so that now it's become Duty) to be countenanced as useful to the Publick; and if any should question this, the Vicar adds, A Man that does Religion good, or his Country any signal Service, though he be moved to it by Avarice, or any other Sinister Ends, which might render the Action odious to God, deserves notwithstanding the Thanks of his Fellow-Subjects, and the Favours of his Prince?*

So, though the Devil sets him to Work, the Vicar is for his having Gratuities, and the Subjects Thanks, and the Prince's Favour; his direct Design being, as the Vicar saith, p. 23. *The Security of Christianity.*

What then? Is the Devil, and those that are moved by him to Avarice, Ambition, or any other sinister Ends, which might render the Action odious to God, to be imployed and thanked? And do they do Religion good? And is their direct Design the security of Christianity? Strange Preaching surely, when the Devil, and those moved by him, do Religion and their Country good! Is this Sound and Christian Doctrine, that is thus delivered by the Vicar, who calls himself a Minister of the Gospel? Are these his Glad Tidings? And deserves he Wages for this? And will his Brethren own him herein? Let the Wise in Heart judge.

But saith the Vicar, *It is a strange Notion our Dissenters seem to have of Persecution, as if when they suffered any small Incon-*
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venience on the account of their Nonconformity, they were immediately Persecuted,—when they only received the due Rewards of their Deeds by Legal Prosecution. But let's hear the Vicar a little farther, and see if we can find what his End is, in rendring the Quakers *Blasphemers, Scandalous Hereticks, Heterodox, and Antichristian*; whether it is not on purpose to render us all odious, and raise wrong Notions of us in Peoples Minds, or in such that may be too apt to believe their Teachers, that so they might the readier fall upon us, when such things are trumpeted against us, and we by their Dirt are thus disguised? Why truly, I find, p. 36. the Vicar saith, *That nothing can more naturally tend to the Weakning of their Interest, (especially in a Christian Nation) than the Report of their being Blasphemers, and Scandalous Hereticks; or, the Notion that their Founders and Grand Apostles—are Heterodox and Antichristian.* This is the way that F. B. the Vicar, and those take that are Envious and Malicious against us, and the Truth we profess; as being the most Natural Way (though most Unchristian) to tend to our Weakning, or the Weakning of our Interest, which is only the spreading and promoting of Truth, thus to raise and spread false Reports of us, as being *Blasphemers, and Scandalous Hereticks*; when they know in their own Consciences, that they cannot, by plain Scripture, prove so foul a Charge upon us.

But it is, it seems, the most Natural Way, especially in a Christian Nation, to beget such a Notion of us; for those that are Christians, are ready to be at least sorrowfully concerned, that those that profess Christianity, should be *Blasphemers against God, and Scandalous Hereticks*; although they are not for severe and persecuting ways, like the Vicar; but are rather pitiful, and willing to inform them better, and thereby to bring them out of these things, than to cut them off in their *Blasphemy and Heresie*; which would favour more of Christian Moderation, though under gross Mistakes about us.

But my Neighbour is so Cruel and Unmerciful towards us, as, without any just occasion, to endeavour to beget wrong Notions of us in the Minds of People, and stigmatize us and our Christian Doctrine, with the odious Names of *Heresie and Blasphemy*; and yet saith, p. 42, 43. *It is not usual with us to*

Censure or Condemn, either Men or their Doctrines, before they are perused and tryed; for, saith he, that would be Rash; and therefore Unchristian Judgment, such as excludes not only Charity, but common Justice; and p. 27. Were the Quakers Tenets neither Erroneous, nor Destructive to Christianity, it would be impardonable Injustice in us to Charge them with such Corruption.

Now I demand of the *Vicar*, to shew where, in any part of his Book, he hath proved by plain Scripture any one of our Doctrines or Tenets, either Erroneous, or Destructive to Christianity; which I am assured, having perused his over and over, he hath not done, nor is ever able to do; and therefore, by his own Confession and Judgment, he is *Rash*, void of *Charity*, and *common Justice*; *unpardonable Injustice*, and of an *Unchristian Judgment*. For it is not his *Is* and *Ands*, foolish *Questions* and *undue Inferences*, that are any *Proofs*; for of *Proofs* he is barren; but with *Folly*, begging the *Question*, and taking that for granted, which he hath not, neither can prove, he abounds; and may therefore well say, as he doth in his Preface, *I am very Conscious, that there are in my Reply many groveling and low Thoughts, such as I would never have troubled the World with, were I perfectly at liberty.*

Now what *Necessity* or *Obligation* he was under unto *F. B.* or any other, to trouble the World with his *many groveling and low Thoughts*, I know not; unless it were to gratifie his own *Envious Spirit*, and *F. B.* that he represents as a *Doctor*, that appears with proper *Antidotes* to obviate the *Infection*, and secure that *Body*, whereof he is a *Member*: But if there be no better *Doctors* nor *Remedies* than *F. B.* and the *Vicar's many groveling low Thoughts*, it's a *Question* to one, whether they will ever have *Health*, or know the *Infection* obviated, and the *Body* secured, whereof they are *Members*; but always remain without *Health* in them.

But to proceed, The *Vicar* grants, *If F. B. can find nothing in our Books but sound Speech, that cannot be Condemned*; he saith, p. 10. *F. B. deserves all the Ignominy they have pelted him with, nor should he fail to have his due share of it from the Church of England; but if they contain any Heresie, or Blasphemous Aspersions, this is not to be expected.*

Well, if we put it on this issue, who must be Judge? And how must it be proved? Must the *Accusers* be Judge? Or
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must their corrupt Meanings, and undue Inferences go for Proofs? Can that be esteemed Fair, Just and Reasonable? Or, shall the plain words of Holy Scriptures? If the latter only, I am willing to put it on that Issue; although they falsely accuse my Friends with the Contempt of them: And if they cannot thereby prove *Heresie* and *Blasphemy*, and what they falsely charge to be in our Books, let them pelt *F. B.* and condemn those of their Church, that have falsely accused us therewith. But if nothing will serve them, but to be both Accusers and Judges, let them not blame us for refusing to appear before such: For I conclude, the *Vicar* will not submit his and his Brethrens Doctrines or Books, to the Judgment of those that Dissent from them, and charge them with Error; nor so commend the Method as Justifiable, and highly Defensible, as he doth *F. B.*'s proceedings against us: And if not, I leave it to my Neighbours, and all Impartial Men, to judge, what Reason there is for the *Vicar*'s angry Reflections on me, and my Friends of *Banbury*, for not meeting *F. B.*? Or what need there was for his malicious *Reply* in Print to my Manuscript? And whether I and my Friends could not better spend our Time, than to answer *F. B.*'s Summons? Although the *Vicar* saith, p. 13. *I cannot devise how the Quakers can spend their Time better*: Poor Man! I can tell him, In staying at home, reading the Holy Scriptures, waiting upon God, and praying to him, in the Name and Spirit of Christ, that he would rebuke that Lying Spirit, and remove that Enmity and Prejudice, which is in *F. B.* the *Vicar*, and other Envious and Ignorant Persons, and be pleased to open their Understandings, and inform their Judgments, and take away their Blindness; that they may not esteem such Doings, *Acts of the best Charity and Compassion*, as the *Vicar* doth; who saith, *It is most abominable Unjust to account F. B. for such a Charitable Piece of Service, malicious*: For the *Vicar* saith, p. 15. *Admitting he be one of little Reputation; I would as soon believe a Bad Man, as a Seraphim, if he commands my Assent with Ocular Demonstration*. But what is this *Ocular Demonstration*? Why it is Reading some pick'd Passages, without Considering the Context, preceding or subsequent Matter; or, admitting other places to shew more clearly what is meant or intended by the Author, in that which may seem somewhat obscure.

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But it is no Wonder the *Vicar* should be so Credulous of what *F. B.* asserts, when he is so highly opinionated of him and his Works, and doth so greatly applaud him; and that may be one Cause or Inducement to *F. B.* that wants no more Confidence, than he hath Prejudice against the Quakers, to present the *Vicar's* Book with his own to the Queen, to trouble her with his many groveling low Thoughts, Emptiness, and repeated Tautologies.

But the *Vicar* asserts, *It is evident that F. B. seeks Goodness, as well as the support of pure Religion:* But how his Works and Fruits demonstrate it, I shall leave the Wise in Heart to judge. For if *Lying* be *Goodness*, and *Persecution* the way to support *pure Religion*; he that was a Lyar from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, and led *Cain* into Anger against his Brother *Abel*, because the Lord had Respect to his Brother's, and not to his Offering, and to murder his Brother, both sought *Goodness*, and to support *pure Religion*: And is that, and such like Doctrines, that the *Vicar* and *F. B.* preach and publish, contained in the *New Testament*? If they be, let him produce Chapter and Verse; but if they be not, let him consider what he hath said, p. 34. *If any Preach other Doctrines, than what are contained in the New Testament, they shall be accursed.*

Let us therefore observe the Way the *Vicar* supposeth to support Christianity; who saith in the said Page, *The Way therefore to support Christianity, as well as to express a becoming Gratitude for the Mercy of the Gospel, is to propose the Written Word, as the sovereign Rule of our Moral Actions, to try all our Thoughts, Words and Deeds thereby; and as they are consistent with, or disagreeable thereto, either to Countenance or Condemn them.* Now I cannot, by the Holy Scriptures, find the sprinkling of Infants with Water, and signing them in the Forehead with the Sign of the Cross, and having God-fathers and God-mothers, to promise and vow for them, *That they shall forsake the Devil and all his Works, &c.* is the Baptism that Christ hath appointed to be the only Door of coming to his Church; or that he, or any of his Apostles, have said, *Who-soever pretend to climb up some other Way, than sprinkling or dipping Infants, can never enter into the Church, and ought not to be numbred amongst the Family or Household of Faith:* Neither can I find

I find by Holy Scripture, that taking Money for Marrying and Burying of People, Sprinkling of Children, Churching of Women, Suing at Law, and Imprisoning the Bodies of Men, and obtaining Sequestrations against them for Non-payment of Tithes, or not paying towards the Repair of a House they call the *Church*, or for Non-payment of a Mortuary, or for the Surplice, or not paying towards the Washing of it, or towards a Cushion to loll on in the Pulpit, or what they call a Communion-Table or Cloth; that ever Christ or his Apostles directed and appointed any to be proceeded against at Law, Cursed, Excommunicated out of the Church, Imprisoned for not doing any of these things: And if the Scripture be the *sovereign Rule of our Moral Actions*, to try all our *Thoughts, Words and Deeds* by, let these Deeds be brought to that Test; and as they are Consistent with the Holy Scriptures, or Disagreeable thereto, let them either be Countenanced or Condemned, as the Vicar proposeth.

Again, If the Vicar can prove, that *Christ*, the *Light within*, which we Profess and Teach, is our *Fancies and Conjectures*; and that it is absurd for us to rely upon the Conduct of our *Light within*; and that it is an Insignificant, Uncertain, Litigious Principle; let him prove it by the Holy Scriptures of the *New Testament*: For if he cannot, *is not he accursed*, as he saith, p. 34. and out of the Way he ought to take to support *Christianity*, and in that which is unbecoming *Gratitude* for the Mercy of the Gospel, and beside the *sovereign Rule of our Moral Actions*, to try all our *Thoughts, Words and Deeds* by? And is he not condemned by the Holy Scriptures, if he doth not prove his *Thoughts, Words and Deeds*, concerning the *Light within*, which we profess, to be Consistent and Agreeable to them?

But after all, I am glad to close with my Neighbour B. L. in p. 45. where he saith, *Here Mr. V. and I will shake Hands: I'll joyn with him in advising all to Hear, Try, and Judge for themselves; for unless they Hear and Try, they cannot rightly Judge.* Very true, and for want of this, I conclude, it is that the Vicar writes so Slightingly of the *Light within*, and so Ignorantly of our *Principles*, and is so Angry against Us: For did he bring his Deeds to the *Light of Christ within*, where with every one is measurably Enlightned, he would see the

Evil of them; and had he Considered before he wrote, he
would have been better for him, and might have escaped
Condemnation: For had he tryed his own, and ours by
the Holy Scriptures, and minded the *Word* or Spirit of Christ
in him, which could have given him a right Judgment, and
followed its Divine Leadings, he would not have been so bold
and Cenforious against us, and acted so contrary to what he
there writes.

I therefore desire, that he may truly Repent of his past
Folly, and grow Wiser for time to come. And I also hope,
my Neighbours will see how unsafe it is to follow him upon
his Credit, or depend on what he or any Man saith, farther than
it is agreeable to the Holy Scriptures of Truth. For as there
were some of old that *garnished the Sepulchres of the Prophets*,
and yet put Christ to Death; so the Vicar, with many more
at this day, highly applaud the Scriptures; and yet, I fear,
they slight, quench, grieve, rebel against, and disregard that
Holy Spirit, which the Scriptures testifie of, and by which
the Pen-men thereof were moved to write them; and I pray
God, that neither he, nor any others, may any longer so do,
but may come to love and receive the same, and be led and
taught thereby, that they may be the Children of God, and
Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

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